

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MANILA 20052

E.O. 11652: GDS 12/31/83
TAGS: MARR, RP
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT MARCOS' COMMENTS ON US BASES IN PHILIPPINES

1. DURING CONVERSATION WITH ME AT TUESDAY, DECEMBER 20, FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS CHRISTMAS RECEPTION ATTENDED BY PRESIDENT AND MRS. MARCOS I RECEIVED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FROM GRANVILLE WATTS, TEMPORARY REUTERS BUREAU CHIEF AND VISNEWS (LONDON-BASED TELEVISION NEWS AGENCY) CORRESPONDENT.
 2. EARLIER TUESDAY, DURING WATTS MALACANANG INTERVIEW WITH MARCOS, THE PRESIDENT WAS ASKED ABOUT THE PRESENT STAGE OF NEGOTIATIONS ON THE US BASES. MARCOS RESPONDED, "WE HAVE AGREED THAT THE QUESTION OF SOVEREIGNTY IS NO LONGER AN ISSUE." MARCOS SAID THE BASES WOULD BE UNDER A FILIPINO COMMANDER AND THE PHILIPPINE FLAG WOULD FLY OVER THE BASES. HE SAID THAT NEGOTIATIONS NOW MOVED INTO QUESTIONS OF JURISDICTION IN THE CASES OF MILITARY PERSONNEL AND THE SECURITY PERIMETER, CUSTOMS, IMMIGRATION AND QUARANTINE.
 3. QUESTIONS ON WHAT MILITARY ASSISTANCE WAS FORTHCOMING IN LIEU OF COMPENSATION FOR THE BASES, MARCOS RESPONDED, "I CANNOT THINK OF ANY ISSUE THAT WILL BE THAT DIFFICULT." FROM THE PHILIPPINES' POINT OF VIEW THERE IS NO IMMEDIATE DANGER OF ANY EXTERNAL ATTACK ON THE PHILIPPINES. THE MILITARY BASES ALSO DO NOT HELP US
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TO MEET AN INTERNAL THREAT LIKE THE REBELLION OR SECESSIONIST MOVEMENT. ALL THIS WE HAVE TO SHOULDER ON OUR OWN. WE HAVE TO SPEND OUR OWN MONEY. THESE BASES ARE NEEDED FOR REGIONAL AND WORLD SECURITY . . . IT IS OUR MODEST CONTRIBUTION TO THE WORLD EFFORT AT MAINTAINING WORLD PEACE." ASKED WHAT WOULD BE GOP ATTITUDE IF U.S. CONGRESS TIED A HUMAN RIGHTS CLAUSE TO THE BASES DEAL, MARCOS SAID: " IN THE NEW SOCIETY WE BASE EVERYTHING

ON HUMAN RIGHTS. LOOK AT WHAT THE PHILIPPINES WAS BEFORE THE NEW SOCIETY, BEFORE MARTIAL LAW. THE PEASANT WAS IN BONDAGE."

4. MARCOS SAID BONDAGE HAD BEEN DONE AWAY WITH. " THE NEW SOCIETY HAS REESTABLISHED HUMAN RIGHTS." PRESSED FURTHER ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF THE US CONGRESS ATTACHING A HUMAN RIGHTS CLAUSE TO THE BASES TREATY, MARCOS SAID; " COUNTRIES SHOULD ALSO BE TREATED WITH JUSTICE. THE PHILIPPINES IS ALSO READY TO GO TO THE OTHER ALTERNATIVE. IF THEY (THE U.S.) DO NOT WANT BASES HERE WE ARE READY TO CONTINUE OPERATING. IF THEY WANT THE MILITARY BASES AGREEMENT TERMINATED BECAUSE WE ARE NOT WORTHY TO BE PARTNERS, BY ALL MEANS WE WILL SUFFER A LITTLE. WE ARE READY. BUT I DO NOT ANTICIPATE ANY SUCH SITUATION ARISING.

COMMENT: GRANVILLE WATTS, THE SOURCE OF THIS INFORMATION, GAVE A VERBAL ACCOUNT OF THE INTERVIEW AT THE RECEPTION. HE LATER WROTE IT UP FROM SHORTHAND NOTES FOR CPAO DAWSON WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT AT THE RECEPTION.
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